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Changemakers: Creativity and Value Creation

Assessment 1: Innovation &
Research

Changemakers: Creativity and Value Creation

ACCA 5033

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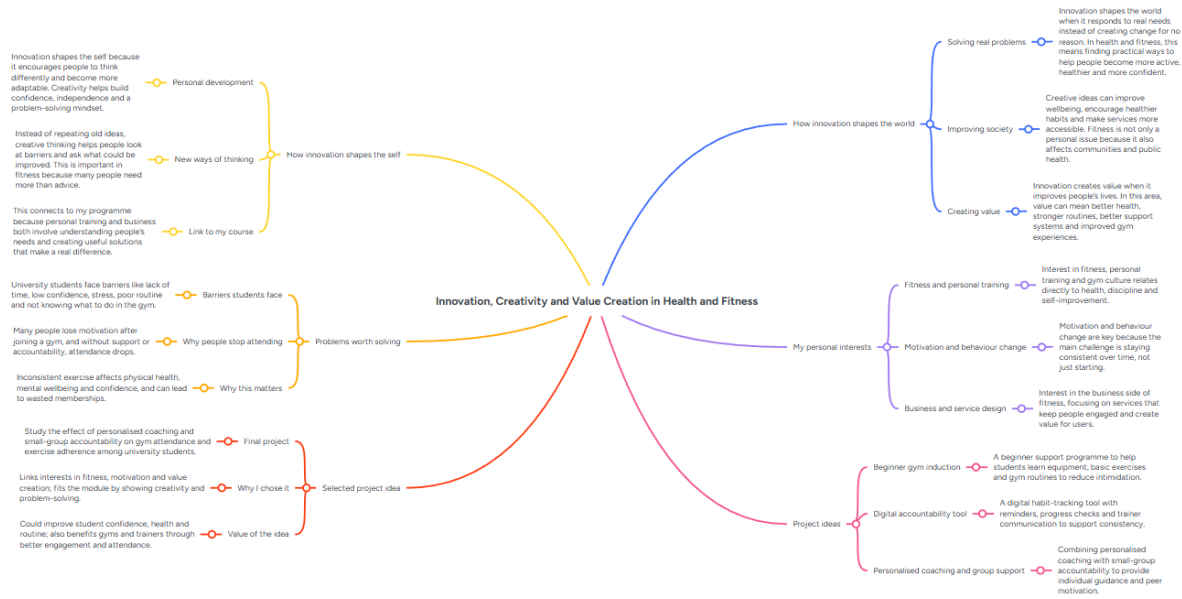
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Task 1: Ideation and Mind Map



This mind map explores how innovation and creativity can create value in health and fitness, both for individuals and for society. I focused on this area because it connects strongly to my interests in personal training, gym culture, motivation and behaviour change. The map shows that innovation is not only about creating something new, but also about solving real problems in a practical and meaningful way. From the different ideas considered, I chose to focus on personalised coaching and small-group accountability for university students. I selected this project because it responds to a genuine issue, which is low gym attendance and poor exercise adherence among students. I also think this idea fits the Changemakers module well because it combines creativity, problem-solving and value creation, while aiming to improve confidence, consistency and overall wellbeing.

Task 2: Aim, Objectives and Research Area

Aim

The research area I have chosen is **exercise adherence in a university gym setting**, with a focus on how personalised coaching and small-group accountability might improve gym attendance among students. I selected this area because physical activity is strongly linked with better physical and mental health, yet many people still struggle to maintain regular exercise habits. The World Health Organization reports that physical inactivity remains high globally, which shows that knowing exercise is important does not always lead to consistent behaviour [1]. Research in fitness-centre settings also suggests that long-term exercise participation is shaped by a combination of psychological and contextual influences, including motivation, self-efficacy, social support and the exercise environment [2]. In a similar way, research on college students found that social support positively predicted exercise adherence, which makes support systems especially relevant to my topic [3].

This project also fits my programme area because it links fitness, personal training and value creation. In fitness, one of the biggest challenges is not getting people to start but helping them continue. That means the issue is not only physical training itself, but also service design and behaviour change. I think this is a strong research area because it looks at a real problem that affects students directly. It also allows me to think like a changemaker, because the focus is on creating a practical solution that could improve wellbeing, confidence and consistency rather than simply describing the problem [1]– [4].

The **aim** of this project is: **to investigate how personalised coaching and small-group accountability affect gym attendance and exercise adherence among university students.**

Objectives

The **objectives** of the project are:

1. To identify the main barriers that stop university students from attending the gym consistently.
2. To examine whether personalised coaching improves student motivation and confidence.
3. To explore whether small-group accountability increases commitment to regular exercise.
4. To compare student perceptions of training alone and training with structured support.
5. To develop recommendations for a more effective student-focused fitness support model.

I think these objectives work well because they move from understanding the problem to exploring possible solutions. They are also specific enough to guide the research, while still leaving room for analysis and reflection. This is important because exercise adherence is not caused by one single factor, so the project needs to consider both behaviour and experience [2], [3].

Research Area

The research philosophy most suitable for this project is **pragmatism**. I chose pragmatism because the project is focused on solving a practical real-world problem rather than proving one single theoretical position. Allemang, Sitter and Dimitropoulos explain that pragmatists use the most appropriate methods to address the issues at hand, especially where complex social problems need more than one approach [5]. I think this philosophy fits my project very well. If I only used numbers, I could measure attendance patterns, but I would not fully understand why students behave the way they do. On the other hand, if I only used interviews, I would gain useful depth but not enough broader evidence. Pragmatism makes more sense because it allows different methods to be combined in a way that is useful and realistic [5].

To search for literature, I would use **Google Scholar, PubMed, Scopus and SPORTDiscus**. Google Scholar is useful because it allows broad searching across many disciplines and sources from one place [6]. PubMed is valuable because it is a free resource for the search and retrieval of biomedical and life sciences literature, and it contains more than 40 million citations and abstracts [7]. Scopus is also relevant because it is a multidisciplinary abstract and citation database with broad coverage across scientific, technical, medical and social sciences literature [8]. SPORTDiscus is particularly important for this topic because it is a specialist database for sports and sports medicine research [9]. Using all four tools would make the search stronger because they provide both breadth and subject-specific depth.

My search strategy would begin with keywords such as **“exercise adherence,” “gym attendance,” “university students,” “personalised coaching,” “social support,”** and **“accountability.”** I would combine these using Boolean operators, for example: *(“exercise adherence” OR “gym attendance”) AND (student OR “university students”) AND (coach OR “social support” OR accountability)***. I would also use quotation marks for phrase searching, filters for date and article type, and citation tracking to follow useful studies forward and backward. Google Scholar’s help pages recommend quotation marks, date tools and citation features such as “Cited by,” while PubMed help explains how filters can narrow results by publication date, article type and language [10], [11]. This matters because a good literature search is not only about finding many sources. It is about finding the most relevant and credible evidence for the research question.

Task 3: Research Strategies

To strengthen the quality of this project, I need to consider **validity, reliability, generalisability and ethics** from the start.

Validity

In simple terms, validity is about whether the research tool actually measures what it is supposed to measure, while reliability is about consistency in the results [12]. In my project, that means the questionnaire and interview questions should focus clearly on gym attendance, barriers to exercise, motivation, confidence and support. If the questions are vague or include unrelated issues, then the data may not answer the research aim properly. Because of this, I would keep the questions short, clear and directly linked to the objectives of the study [12].

To improve validity further, I would ask a tutor, classmate or another suitable person to review the questionnaire before the main study begins. This would help check whether the wording makes sense and whether the questions actually reflect the topic being studied.

Reliability

Reliability would be improved by keeping the format consistent, for example by using the same response scales for each participant and giving all participants the same instructions. Ranganathan, Caduff and Frampton describe validity and reliability as the accuracy and consistency of a research tool, which shows why careful questionnaire design matters so much [12].

Generalisability

Generalisability is more limited in a project like this because the sample would probably come from one university or one gym setting. Andrade explains that external validity is about whether findings can be generalised to other contexts, and that results may not be generalisable to other populations if the study sample is narrow [13]. That means I need to be realistic in how I present my findings. A small student-based project can still be useful, but it should not claim to represent all gym users everywhere. I think this is an important part of critical thinking because it shows that the limitations of the study are being considered honestly rather than ignored [13].

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are also important. The Health Research Authority states that participant information and consent should be clear, proportionate and properly designed rather than copied from a generic template [14]. In my project, participants should be given a short information sheet, told what the study is about, informed that participation is voluntary, and reminded that they can withdraw at any time. Responses should be anonymised and stored securely. Because the topic includes confidence and exercise habits, the wording of the questions should also avoid making participants feel judged or uncomfortable. Ethical research is not just a formal requirement; it also improves trust and encourages more honest responses [14].

Research Strategies

The most suitable research strategy for this project would be a **mixed-methods approach** using a short online questionnaire followed by a small number of semi-structured interviews. Jones, Baxter and Khanduja explain that questionnaires are useful because they allow larger groups to be assessed relatively easily, although good survey research still requires planning and careful design [15]. DeJonckheere and Vaughn explain that semistructured interviews are effective for understanding participants' thoughts, beliefs and experiences in depth [16]. I think this combination works well because the questionnaire would show overall patterns, while the interviews would help explain why those patterns exist. This is important for my project because exercise adherence is influenced by both measurable behaviour and personal experience [15], [16].

Pilot Data Collection

Before the main data collection, I would carry out a **pilot study** using the questionnaire in Appendix A. Hassan, Schattner and Mazza describe a pilot study as a small study used to test research protocols, data collection tools and recruitment strategies before the full study begins [17]. In my project, the pilot would help me check whether the questions are clear, relevant and not repetitive. It would also help me see whether the survey is too long or too vague. The feedback from this pilot should then be recorded in **Appendix B** and used to improve the final version of the questionnaire. That would strengthen both the focus and the quality of the project [17].

Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis

For **quantitative analysis**, I would use descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and mean scores. This would help me identify common barriers to attendance, average confidence levels and how strongly students believe that coaching or group accountability could help them. If the sample was suitable, I could also use simple comparisons or correlations to look at relationships between variables such as confidence and gym attendance. For **qualitative analysis**, I would mainly use thematic analysis because it is a flexible and accessible method for identifying patterns across interview data [18]. Another possible approach would be content analysis, which focuses more directly on categorising repeated ideas in the data; interestingly, Tross, Dias and Zanetti used content analysis in their qualitative study of long-term fitness-centre participation [2]. I think thematic analysis would be the better choice here because it would allow richer interpretation of student experiences [2], [18].

Finally, I would think carefully about when enough qualitative data had been collected. Saunders et al. argue that saturation should not be treated as a simple fixed number, but should instead be understood in relation to the research question and the analytical framework being used [19]. I think that is a useful point because it prevents the research from becoming too mechanical. In this project, the aim would not be to collect as many interviews as possible, but to collect enough meaningful data to identify clear themes about attendance, confidence, support and exercise adherence [19].

Appendix A: Pilot Questionnaire

Title: Student Gym Attendance and Support Survey

1. How often do you currently attend the gym each week?
0 times / 1 time / 2–3 times / 4 or more times
2. What is the biggest barrier that stops you attending regularly?
Lack of time / Low motivation / Not knowing what to do / Feeling judged or intimidated / Cost / Other
3. On a scale of 1–5, how confident do you feel when training alone?
1 = not confident at all / 5 = very confident
4. On a scale of 1–5, how much do you think personalised coaching would help your consistency?
1 = not at all / 5 = very much
5. On a scale of 1–5, how much would a small accountability group help your gym attendance?
1 = not at all / 5 = very much
6. What kind of support would make you more likely to attend the gym consistently?
Short written response

Appendix B: Pilot Feedback Record

Tester		1
What	was	clear:
What	was	unclear:
Suggested improvement:		
Tester		2
What	was	clear:
What	was	unclear:
Suggested improvement:		
Tester		3
What	was	clear:
What	was	unclear:
Suggested improvement:		

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